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## MEANING TRANSFORMATION IN MULTIMODAL DIGITAL MEDIA AND TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

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### Abstract

The article explores semantic and pragmatic transformations in digital media translation, identifying the key lingual and extralingual factors shaping meaning construction in technologically mediated communication and outlining effective translation strategies for preserving communicative intent in target-language media discourse. The study argues that digital media discourse, unlike traditional written texts, is multimodal, compressed, immediate, and audience-oriented, which increases meaning variability and strengthens the translator's mediating role. Particular attention is given to lingual factors operating at the lexical, syntactic, discourse, and pragmatic levels. The article emphasizes the decisive role of extralingual factors in shaping meaning interpretation and translation strategies, often prioritizing communicative efficiency and relevance over formal equivalence. Semantic transformation strategies in digital media translation are analysed with a focus on compression and expansion, realized through omission, concretization, generalization, and explication. Pragmatic transformations are examined in terms of modulation of illocutionary force, pragmatic reframing, recontextualization, and compensation. Special attention is devoted to conveying implicit meaning in translation, which is identified as a core feature of multimodal digital media discourse. The study outlines three main translation strategies for rendering implicit meaning: preservation of implicitness, partial explication, and compensation. The findings confirm that semantic and pragmatic transformations in digital media translation function as adaptive mechanisms rather than distortions of meaning. Translation is conceptualized as a context-sensitive, decision-driven process of mediated meaning construction shaped by platform conventions, audience expectations, and communicative goals.

**Keywords:** *multimodality, digital media translation, cross-cultural communication, communicative intent, pragmatic adaptation, semantic variability, contextualization, audience orientation.*

## 1. Introduction

The unprecedented growth of digital media has profoundly reshaped contemporary communication practices, giving rise to new modes of meaning creation, circulation, and perception. Digital media texts operate within a technologically mediated environment characterized by multimodality, interactivity, hypertextuality, and algorithm-driven visibility, all of which play a crucial role in shaping how information is organized, understood, and received. These features not only transform communicative strategies but also impose new constraints and affordances on the translation process.

Within multimodal digital media communication, translation can no longer be viewed solely as interlingual transfer of verbal content but rather as a multifaceted process of meaning negotiation shaped by extralingual factors including platform architecture, audience expectations, temporal immediacy, visual and audiovisual elements, and algorithmic prioritization.

The core problem therefore lies in identifying the specific ways in which meaning is transformed in the course of translating digital media texts and in determining the mechanisms that govern these transformations. This includes examining the interaction between lingual and extralingual factors, the role of technological mediation in shaping translation decisions, and the extent to which meaning shifts are conditioned by communicative intent, genre conventions, and platform-specific constraints. Addressing this problem is essential for developing a systematic understanding of translation as a meaning-transformative practice within the multimodal digital media environment.

*The aim* of this study is to identify semantic and pragmatic transformations in digital media texts and to determine the translation strategies that help preserve communicative intent in technologically mediated communication, with particular emphasis on the impact of multimodality, platform-specific constraints, and audience-oriented communication on translation choices and the reconstruction of meaning in the target language.

To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following interrelated *tasks*:

- 1) to define the lingual and extralingual characteristics of multimodal digital media discourse that influence meaning construction and interpretation in translation;
- 2) to identify the main types of semantic transformations occurring in the translation of digital media texts, particularly translation strategies of semantic compression and semantic expansion;
- 3) to analyse pragmatic transformations in digital media translation including modulation of illocutionary force, pragmatic reframing, and recontextualization;
- 4) to explore translation strategies for conveying implicit meaning in multimodal media environments where meaning is partially encoded through visual, contextual, and intertextual cues such as headlines, hyperlinks, images, captions, and platform formats; to determine how multimodal communicative conditions influence translators' strategic choices and the resulting transformation of meaning.

*The research material* consists of English-language digital media texts and their Ukrainian translations collected from online news platforms, social media publications, and digital news alerts. The corpus includes headlines, short analytical posts, and multimedia news fragments that combine verbal and non-verbal elements such as images, hyperlinks, and contextual framing. These texts represent typical examples of multimodal media communication, where meaning emerges from the interaction between lingual content and surrounding digital media elements.

*The hypothesis* of the research is postulated as follows: meaning transformation in the translation of digital media texts is not primarily caused by lingual asymmetry between languages but by the multimodal, platform-dependent, and audience-oriented nature of digital communication. Consequently, translators systematically employ semantic and pragmatic adaptive strategies such as compression, expansion, modulation of illocutionary force, and recontextualization in order to maintain communicative effectiveness within the multimodal digital media environment.

## **2. Method**

The study employs an integrated methodological framework combining discourse analysis, translation analysis, and elements of multimodal analysis.

Discourse analysis is used to examine the communicative structure and pragmatic functions of digital media texts, with particular attention to the interaction between lingual and contextual elements in online multimodal media communication.

Comparative translation analysis is applied to identify semantic and pragmatic translation transformations between the source texts and their Ukrainian translations. This method makes it possible to determine the translation strategies used to adapt meaning under platform-specific constraints.

The study incorporates elements of multimodal analysis, which considers the interaction between verbal elements and other semiotic resources typical of multimodal digital media environments including headlines, visual framing, hyperlinks, and layout structure. This approach allows the research to account for the ways in which meaning is distributed across multiple communicative channels rather than encoded solely in lingual form.

In addition, functional-pragmatic analysis is used to examine how communicative intentions, evaluative stance, and audience orientation influence translation decisions.

The combination of these methods makes it possible to analyse meaning transformation in digital media translation as a context-sensitive and multimodally conditioned process.

## **3. Theoretical framework**

### **3.1. Multimodality of digital media discourse**

Digital media discourse is inherently multimodal, combining several communicative channels – linguistic, visual, auditory, and interactive resources – that jointly participate in meaning construction. Unlike traditional written texts where linguistic signs dominate communication, digital media discourse involves the simultaneous interaction of multiple semiotic modes. As a result, meaning emerges from the coordinated functioning of several semiotic resources that operate together within technologically mediated contexts.

The theoretical foundations of multimodality have been extensively developed within social semiotics. According to G. Kress and Th. van Leeuwen (2001), contemporary communication increasingly relies on the integration of different semiotic modes such as language, image, typography, colour, and layout – each mode offering distinct possibilities for representing and communicating meaning. The interaction of these modes forms complex semiotic configurations in which meaning is conveyed through several channels rather than relying solely on verbal language. This approach has become essential for understanding communication in digital media environments, where visual and interactive components frequently play a role comparable to (or even more significant than) that of written text in shaping meaning in the target language.

Expanding on this approach, C. Jewitt (2009) highlights that digital technologies have substantially expanded the range of semiotic resources used in communication practices. Digital platforms enable the integration of text, image, video, sound, and interactive design within a single communicative space, creating complex multimodal configurations. In digital media discourse, lingual elements often function together with visual components such as photographs, infographics, emojis, and interface design features forming communicative units that cannot be adequately interpreted through purely linguistic analysis. Multimodal analysis provides methodological tools for examining how these different modes interact and contribute to meaning-making processes.

The technological dimension of digital communication is further explored by L. Manovich (2001), whose work on new media theory highlights the structural characteristics of digital communication. The researcher argues that digital media operate according to principles such as modularity, variability, and automation. Digital texts are composed of multiple modular elements including text blocks, images, hyperlinks, and multimedia components that can be reorganized or

dynamically displayed depending on the platform and the user's interaction. This modularity reinforces the multimodal nature of digital discourse by enabling different semiotic resources to coexist and interact within a single communicative framework.

Another key aspect of digital media discourse is the participatory nature of communication, which has been extensively examined by H. Jenkins (2006) who introduces the concept of convergence culture to describe how digital media environments facilitate interaction between producers and audiences. In such environments, users actively participate in the creation, circulation, and reinterpretation of media content through comments, reposts, memes, and other forms of online engagement. This participatory dimension adds another layer to multimodal communication, as user-generated visual and textual elements become part of the broader discourse network.

While early studies of multimodality focused primarily on theoretical foundations, later research has developed more systematic analytical frameworks for examining multimodal texts. J. A. Bateman (2014) proposes detailed methodological approaches for analysing the interaction between verbal and visual elements in multimodal documents. He argues that multimodal texts should be viewed as structured artifacts in which layout, visual design, and lingual elements operate together guiding the interpretation of information. In digital media contexts – such as online news platforms or social media posts – the arrangement of headlines, images, captions, and hyperlinks forms a multimodal architecture that shapes the reader's perception of the message.

A critical perspective on multimodal communication is developed in the work of D. Machin (2013), whose research focuses on the role of visual communication and ideological representation in media discourse. He demonstrates that visual elements including image framing, colour schemes, typography, and composition contribute to ideological meaning-making in contemporary media and shape audience perception. According to D. Machin, visual elements are not merely illustrative but function as powerful communicative resources capable of shaping evaluation, emotion, and persuasion. In digital journalism and online media where visual content often dominates textual information these semiotic resources become central to the construction of narratives and ideological framing, influencing emotional responses, reinforcing narratives, or framing political and social issues. Consequently, the analysis of digital media discourse requires attention not only to lingual content but also to the ideological functions of visual and design elements.

The cognitive dimension of multimodal communication is explored in the research of Ch. Forceville, particularly in his studies of multimodal metaphor. Forceville (2009) demonstrates that metaphorical meaning can be expressed not only through language but also through multiple semiotic modes including visual images, sound, and their combinations. In digital media discourse, multimodal metaphors frequently appear in political cartoons, advertising campaigns, and internet memes, where visual and textual elements jointly construct figurative meanings. Such multimodal metaphors often convey complex evaluative or ideological messages that depend on the interaction of different semiotic resources.

Research on digital discourse has also emphasized the significant role of multimodal narrative practices in online communication. R. Page (2012) notes that digital storytelling is marked by a strong degree of multimodal integration, in which textual, visual, and interactive components jointly contribute to the construction of narrative meaning. Her studies of blogs, social media storytelling, and online communities show that digital narratives are often co-constructed through multimodal resources such as images, emojis, hyperlinks, and embedded media. These elements contribute to the emotional tone and interpersonal dynamics of digital communication, illustrating how multimodality functions as a key mechanism for meaning negotiation in online environments.

A further contribution to multimodal discourse analysis comes from J. Wildfeuer (2014), whose work focuses on narrative structures in multimodal texts. She argues that multimodal narratives should be analysed through integrated frameworks that consider the sequential organization of images, text, and other semiotic resources. Her research demonstrates that meaning emerges through the interaction of these elements across temporal and spatial dimensions, particularly in digital media

formats such as web narratives, digital comics, and audiovisual storytelling. This perspective underscores the dynamic nature of multimodal meaning-making in contemporary media communication.

Finally, L. Mondada (2016) contributes to the understanding of multimodality through the study of interactional practices in communication. Her research highlights how multimodal resources, including gesture, gaze, spatial orientation, and digital interfaces, play a crucial role in structuring communicative interaction. Although her work often focuses on face-to-face interaction, the analytical insights are highly relevant for digital environments where users interact through interfaces that integrate textual, visual, and interactive elements.

Taken together, these works expand the understanding of multimodal discourse by highlighting its structural, ideological, cognitive, narrative, and interactional dimensions demonstrating that multimodality is a central characteristic of contemporary digital media discourse. The research of Kress van Leeuwen establishes the semiotic foundations of multimodal communication, while Jewitt expands the methodological framework for multimodal analysis. Manovich and Jenkins highlight the technological and participatory dynamics of digital media environments, whereas Bateman and Machin provide analytical tools for examining the structural and ideological functions of multimodal texts. Forceville, Page and Wildfeuer illustrate how multimodality operates in cognitive and narrative dimensions of digital communication. Finally, Mondada addresses multimodality through the study of interactional practices in communication.

Collectively, these approaches provide a comprehensive theoretical basis for analysing multimodal digital media discourse and for understanding how meaning is constructed through the interaction of multiple semiotic modes in technologically mediated environments.

### **3.2. Meaning transformation as a problem of digital media translation**

The multimodal character of digital media communication significantly affects how meaning is produced, perceived, and interpreted, and therefore plays a crucial role in translation processes within multimodal digital media environment, enhancing the variability of meaning and increasing the translator's mediating role.

The selected theoretical sources represent different stages and perspectives in the scholarly investigation of language, meaning, and translation in digitally mediated communication. Although all of them address transformation processes in contemporary media environments, they differ significantly in theoretical depth, disciplinary orientation, and the role attributed to translation within digital discourse.

The study of digital media discourse has been approached from different yet complementary perspectives in contemporary linguistics. J. P. Đorđević (2022) and Crispin Thurlow (2017) represent two influential directions within this field, differing in their theoretical orientation and methodological emphasis.

Đorđević (2022) conceptualizes digital discourse as an interdisciplinary phenomenon situated at the intersection of linguistics and media studies, with a strong focus on methodological systematization. Drawing on frameworks such as Critical Discourse Analysis and framing theory, she adapts traditional analytical tools to the digital environment and proposes structured models for examining various forms of online communication. Her approach remains largely linguocentric and practically oriented, aiming to provide clear and applicable research instruments.

In contrast, Thurlow (2017) adopts a socio-linguistic and critical perspective, interpreting digital discourse as a set of socially embedded and multimodal meaning-making practices. He emphasizes the interplay between language, technology, visibility, and ideology, arguing that language operates as one of several semiotic resources rather than a dominant system. His framework underscores the importance of integrating both micro-level linguistic analysis and macro-level social contexts.

M. O'Hagan's monograph *Translation-mediated Communication in a Digital World* (2002) proposes a conceptual redefinition of translation in multimodal digital environments. Translation is

conceptualized as a form of mediated communication embedded in technological systems and social practices. Meaning is not merely transferred but co-constructed through the interaction of language, technology, and users. Despite its earlier publication date, O'Hagan's framework remains foundational, as it anticipates later discussions of multimodality, technological mediation, and non-linear meaning production that are central to contemporary digital media studies.

D. Pirdaus represents the field of media and Internet linguistics, focusing on language transformation in multimodal digital communication without a specific translation-oriented agenda (Pirdaus, 2025, pp. 51–54). The study highlights stylistic simplification, lexical innovation, and discursive hybridity in online media. Meaning transformation is explained as a consequence of changing communicative habits and platform affordances. Although translation is absent as an analytical category, this research provides valuable contextual insight into the linguistic environment within which digital media translation operates.

F. Boliquilov adopts a meta-theoretical and interdisciplinary approach, surveying contemporary developments in translation and linguistics under conditions of rapid technological change. Unlike Pirdaus, Boliquilov explicitly addresses translation, highlighting the impact of digital tools, automation, and technological mediation on translation decision-making (Boliquilov, 2025, pp. 46–49). Meaning transformation is viewed broadly as a consequence of shifting methodological paradigms rather than a purely text-bound phenomenon, thereby framing translation as a reconceptualized professional and cognitive practice in the digital age.

G. Usmonova focuses on semantic shift in social media communication, analysing how meanings are reshaped under conditions of speed, informality, and intensified audience interaction. Meaning change is treated as a dynamic, socially driven process influenced by platform logic and user behaviour (Usmonova, 2025, p. 631). Although translation is not directly examined, the study is highly relevant for translation research, as it identifies sources of semantic instability that translators must address when working with social-media-based content.

Finally, L. Mialkovska et al. (2024) provide a linguistic and pragmatic analysis of modern media communication, integrating discourse analysis with pragmatic interpretation. Meaning transformation is viewed as the result of communicative intent, audience orientation, and contextual framing. Translation is addressed implicitly rather than explicitly; however, the authors' emphasis on pragmatic adaptation closely aligns with translation processes in digital media, particularly those involving recontextualization and audience-oriented reformulation.

This comparative analysis highlights the necessity of integrating linguistic evidence, pragmatic analysis, and translation theory in order to adequately account for meaning transformation in contemporary multimodal digital media communication.

#### 4. Results and discussion

Meaning transformation in digital media texts is determined by a complex interaction of lingual and extralingual factors, which significantly affect both the interpretation and translation of media content.

##### 4.1. Lingual factors of meaning transformation in multimodal digital media discourse

Lingual factors play a decisive role in shaping meaning transformation in multimodal digital media communication and its translation.

At the lexical level, multimodal digital media discourse is characterized by neologization, semantic extension, metaphorization, borrowings and abbreviations, all of which contribute to meaning transformation and pose specific challenges for translation. Neologization is illustrated by newly coined terms such as *doomscrolling* or *infodemic*, which encapsulate complex digital behaviours and require either borrowing or descriptive translation in the target language. Semantic extension can be observed in words like *platform*, which in digital media extends beyond its original technical meaning to denote social networks, content ecosystems, and modes of interaction. Metaphorization is evident in expressions such as *information war* or *viral content* where biological

or military metaphors are used to conceptualize digital phenomena, often necessitating careful adaptation to preserve evaluative connotations. Finally, the rapid circulation of borrowings and abbreviations including *AI*, *DM*, *NFT*, or *FAQ* reflects the globalization and standardization of digital communication, compelling translators to decide between direct borrowing, transliteration, or explicitation depending on audience familiarity and communicative context.

At the syntactic level, digital media texts tend toward compression, fragmentation, and non-canonical sentence structures, including ellipsis, parataxis, and headline-style nominal constructions, which significantly influence meaning construction and translation. For example, ellipsis is common in headlines such as *More sanctions expected* or *Talks ongoing* where auxiliary verbs and explicit subjects are omitted to achieve brevity. Parataxis can be observed in sequences like *Markets fall, investors panic, currencies weaken*, where clauses are juxtaposed without explicit connectors, creating a rapid, event-driven narrative. Headline-style nominal constructions such as *Government response under scrutiny* or *Economic recovery at risk* replace full verbal predicates with noun phrases, foregrounding key concepts while suppressing agency and temporality. These syntactic features enhance immediacy and readability in digital media but often require restructuring in translation to preserve information hierarchy, coherence, and pragmatic force in the target language.

At the discourse level, cohesion and coherence in digital media texts are often achieved through implicit connections, intertextual references, hashtags, hyperlinks, and multimodal cues rather than through explicit grammatical markers. For instance, hashtags such as *#BreakingNews* or *#ClimateCrisis* function as thematic anchors that link individual posts to broader discursive frames, while hyperlinks guide readers to background information without verbal elaboration. Intertextual references including allusions to previous headlines or viral events rely on shared knowledge to generate coherence, as in captions like *Another 2008 moment?* accompanied by a financial chart. Multimodal cues – images, emojis, layout, or typography – further contribute to meaning construction by reinforcing evaluative stance or emotional tone. In translation, these implicit cohesive devices often require compensation or selective explicitation, as part of the meaning remains contextually inferred rather than linguistically encoded.

Pragmatic factors within language use such as evaluative vocabulary, modality, stance markers, and expressive means also play a significant role in meaning transformation in multimodal digital media communication. For example, evaluative adjectives like *controversial*, *dramatic*, or *unprecedented* introduce an implicit judgment that shapes audience perception, while modal expressions such as *may*, *is expected to*, or *must* signal varying degrees of certainty or urgency. Stance markers including phrases like *experts warn* or *critics argue* frame information from a particular perspective, and expressive means such as intensifiers or emotionally charged wording enhance persuasive impact. As digital media discourse often blends informational and persuasive functions, translators must strategically adjust these pragmatic elements to preserve communicative intent, align with audience expectations, and maintain the intended illocutionary force in the target language.

#### **4.2. Extralingual factors of meaning transformation in multimodal digital media discourse**

Extralingual factors play a crucial role in meaning transformation within multimodal digital media communication, as they shape not only how messages are produced and disseminated but also how they are interpreted and translated. Unlike lingual factors, which function within the language system itself, extralingual factors originate in the broader technological, social, cultural, and communicative environment of digital media, shaping how messages are produced, disseminated, interpreted, and translated.

One of the key extralingual factors influencing meaning transformation in digital media translation is technological mediation. Digital platforms impose specific formats, algorithms, and technical constraints that shape message length, visibility, and prioritization. Algorithm-driven content ranking, character limits, interface design, and multimodal integration (combining text with images, video, or emoji) directly affect meaning construction by encouraging semantic compression,

heightened expressiveness, and selective foregrounding of information. As a result, translation decisions are frequently guided by platform logic and visibility requirements rather than by purely linguistic considerations, leading translators to adapt content strategically in order to maximize communicative effectiveness within the multimodal digital environment.

Communicative context and audience orientation constitute another significant extralingual dimension of meaning transformation in digital media translation. Digital media texts are typically produced for heterogeneous, transnational, and rapidly changing audiences, whose cultural backgrounds, informational competence, and value systems may differ considerably. This diversity necessitates pragmatic adaptation in translation, including cultural filtering, selective explication or omission of background information, and adjustments in tone, register, and evaluative stance. As a result, meaning transformation arises as translators adapt messages to the target audience's expectations, knowledge, and cultural norms, ensuring communicative relevance and interpretive accessibility in digital media contexts.

Temporal factors also exert a strong influence on meaning construction in multimodal digital communication. The emphasis on immediacy, real-time updates, and rapid information circulation significantly reduces opportunities for detailed contextualization and nuanced elaboration. Under such conditions, meaning is often provisional, fragmentary, and subject to continuous revision as new information emerges. This temporal pressure affects translation strategies by prioritizing speed, relevance, and timeliness over completeness or stylistic refinement, leading translators to favour concise formulations, flexible wording, and easily updateable textual structures.

In addition, sociocultural and ideological factors play a crucial role in shaping meaning transformation in multimodal digital media communication. Media texts often reflect dominant narratives, value judgments, and ideological positioning that are not always explicitly encoded at the lingual level but are embedded in framing choices, thematic emphasis, and patterns of representation. Translators must therefore interpret these implicit evaluations, underlying perspectives, and discourse positioning in order to reproduce, mitigate, or appropriately adapt the intended meaning in the target language, considering the sociocultural norms and ideological sensitivities of the target audience.

Finally, multimodality functions as a decisive extralingual factor in digital media communication. Images, layout, typography, audio-visual elements, and interactive features often carry a substantial part of the message, complementing or even overriding the verbal component. In translation, this multimodal configuration frequently requires partial verbalization, the rebalancing of meaning components, or the use of compensatory strategies to account for non-verbal cues such as visual symbolism, colour coding, or sound effects that cannot be directly transferred across languages. As a result, translators must interpret meaning holistically, considering the interaction between verbal and non-verbal elements to preserve the overall communicative effect.

While lexical and syntactic transformations shape meaning at the formal level, they do not fully account for the communicative effects of translated digital media texts. Meaning transformation therefore extends to the pragmatic level, where translation strategies are guided by communicative intent, audience orientation, and platform conventions.

### **4.3. Translation strategies of semantic transformation in multimodal digital media discourse**

In digitally mediated environments, translation rarely preserves stable meanings in their original form. Instead, it involves the strategic reconfiguration of meaning, with translators recalibrating illocutionary force, evaluative stance, and contextual framing to ensure functional adequacy under platform-specific constraints.

At the semantic level, meaning transformations often manifest through translation strategies of semantic compression and semantic expansion, which are realized through generalization, concretization, descriptive translation and selective omission.

Semantic compression, one of the most frequent semantic transformation strategies in digital media translation, involves reducing propositional content while retaining the core informational value. This strategy is largely determined by the specific nature of digital media texts such as headlines, push notifications, captions, and social media posts, which prioritize brevity and immediacy.

In practice, semantic compression is realized through translation transformations such as omission, concretization and, in some cases, generalization whereby translators condense information, omit secondary details, or selectively specify key elements while replacing less essential explicit statements with more generalized or inferable meanings. For example:

- (1) *Authorities announced that emergency measures would be implemented in several regions following severe weather conditions.* – ‘*Запроваджено надзвичайні заходи в регіонах, що постраждали від негоди*’.

In this source sentence taken from a headline or push notification, reporting verbs *announced*, causal explanations, and temporal markers are omitted. The strategy is deliberately chosen to meet platform-specific constraints and the reading habits of digital audiences, where rapid scanning and instant comprehension are prioritized. Although explicit details are reduced, the essential meaning is preserved, while immediacy, clarity, and communicative efficiency are enhanced.

Concretization, by contrast, is applied when vague or underspecified source expressions require clarification in order to preserve informational value and ensure accurate interpretation. For example:

- (2) *The company faced regulatory issues.* – ‘*Компанія зіткнулася зі штрафами та перевітками на відповідність вимогам*’.

In translation, the addition of ‘штрафами та перевітками на відповідність вимогам’ specify the nature of the problem. The choice between these strategies is determined by factors such as the target audience’s background knowledge, the genre and format of the digital platform, and the overall communicative goals of the translated message.

Semantic expansion is conversely employed when cultural references, implicit assumptions, or context-dependent meanings in the source text require explication for the target audience. This strategy is commonly realized through translation transformations such as generalization, explication and, in some cases, descriptive translation whereby culture-specific or implicitly encoded elements are rendered in a more accessible and explanatory form.

Generalization is employed when excessive specificity in the source text is irrelevant, culturally inaccessible, or potentially distracting for the target audience, leading the translator to replace detailed references with more inclusive or neutral formulations. For example:

- (3) *The decision was criticized by members of the House Ways and Means Committee.* – ‘*Рішення було піддане критиці з боку законодавців*’.

In the translation of the source sentence, institutional specificity (*the House Ways and Means Committee*) is reduced to ensure broader comprehensibility – ‘*з боку законодавців*’.

As a result, semantic equivalence in digital media translation is frequently functional rather than referential, oriented toward preserving communicative impact and relevance rather than achieving formal symmetry of content. For example:

- (4) *The policy sparked backlash online.* – ‘*Політика викликала широке обурення в соціальних мережах*’.

In this case, the vague reference *online* is explicated ‘в соціальних мережах’ to specify the communicative space in which the reaction occurred. This strategy is motivated by the need to reduce ambiguity and clarify culturally and contextually bound meanings for the target audience. Although descriptive translation results in increased textual length, it enhances interpretive transparency and ensures accurate comprehension within the digital media context.

#### **4.4. Translation strategies of pragmatic transformation in multimodal digital media discourse**

Multimodal digital media discourse frequently combines informational, persuasive, and expressive functions, which may be distributed differently across languages and cultures.

Pragmatic transformations arise from shifts in communicative intention, evaluative stance, and audience orientation. In translation, this gives rise to a set of pragmatic adaptation strategies including modulation of illocutionary force, pragmatic reframing, and recontextualization, each realized through specific translational transformations such as modulation, grammatical replacement, total reorganization, and transposition.

Modulation of illocutionary force is a key pragmatic transformation strategy in digital media translation, whereby the translator adjusts modality, emphasis, and evaluative markers to align the message with the communicative norms of multimodal digital media. This is achieved through shifts in tense, aspect, intensifiers, and hedging devices, enabling translators to strengthen urgency, soften categorical statements, or recalibrate degrees of certainty in accordance with the pragmatic conventions of the target media environment. For example:

(5) *The situation could escalate further.* – ‘Ситуація, ймовірно, погіршиться’.

In this case, the modal verb *could*, which expresses possibility, is replaced by a stronger probability marker ‘ймовірно’, which intensifies the sense of urgency. This strategic choice reflects the pragmatic conventions of news alerts and breaking news formats, where heightened immediacy and impact are prioritized in order to capture audience attention and increase perceived relevance.

Pragmatic reframing is another widely used pragmatic transformation strategy, which involves altering perspective or focus without changing the core message. This strategy is realized through specific translation transformations such as syntactic or morphological replacement, transposition, shifts in thematic focus enabling the foregrounding or backgrounding of agency, responsibility, or evaluative emphasis while preserving the core propositional meaning. For example:

(6) *Government officials defended the decision.* – ‘Рішення було захищене урядовцями’.

This restructuring shifts the focus from the actors to the action itself, thereby backgrounding agency. Such reframing is often strategically motivated by ideological sensitivity, audience expectations, or dominant media conventions in the target culture, allowing the translator to align the message with prevailing norms of representation while maintaining its essential meaning.

Recontextualization is a particularly significant pragmatic transformation strategy in digital media translation, whereby the translated text is repositioned within a new discursive, cultural, or media context shaped by platform conventions and audience expectations. As digital media texts operate in rapidly changing multimodal communicative environments influenced by surrounding headlines, hyperlinks, and visual elements, translation often requires contextual relocation and pragmatic recalibration of meaning.

Recontextualization is typically realized through specific translation transformation such as the total reorganization of information, which may involve shifts in framing (for example, from a problem-oriented to a solution-oriented presentation), changes in perspective (from an institutional to

an audience-centered viewpoint), or restructuring of information flow (such as adapting an inverted-pyramid news structure to a more narrative or explanatory format). For example:

(7) *Authorities announce new restrictions amid rising cases.* – ‘Що нові обмеження означають для мешканців’.

A source headline framed institutionally is recontextualized in translation, shifting the focus from official action to audience impact. Such a translation transformation does not alter the core informational content but adapts its presentation to the expectations and reading practices of the target media environment.

The strategic choice of recontextualization is primarily motivated by the need to ensure coherence, relevance, and communicative effectiveness in the target media space rather than to replicate the original textual configuration.

#### 4.5. Translation strategies of conveying implicit meaning in digital media translation

The phenomena of irony, presupposition, intertextual references, and culturally encoded evaluations are often linguistically underdetermined and rely heavily on shared background knowledge, contextual awareness, and media literacy.

Implicit meaning plays a central role in multimodal digital media communication, where a substantial part of the message is conveyed indirectly rather than through explicit lingual forms. In multimodal digital environments, these implicit meanings are frequently reinforced by headlines, visual cues, hyperlinks, or prior discursive events, which further complicates their interpretation and translation.

In translation, implicit meanings may be partially lost, reformulated, or strategically compensated through pragmatic adaptation. This process inevitably leads to meaning transformation, as translators must balance interpretive transparency with platform-imposed constraints such as brevity, immediacy, and multimodality. The challenge lies in preserving the intended evaluative or pragmatic effect without overburdening the text or disrupting its communicative flow.

To address implicit meaning in digital media translation, translators typically employ one of three main translation strategies: preservation of implicitness, partial explication, and compensation.

The first translation strategy is preservation of implicitness, whereby the original indirectness is maintained on the assumption that the target audience shares sufficient background knowledge to infer the intended meaning. For example:

(8) *The negotiations did not produce the expected outcome.* – ‘Переговори не дали очікуваного результату’.

In this case, the source text implicitly conveys the idea of failure or breakdown of the talks without explicitly stating it. The translator preserves the implicit meaning in the target text, assuming that the target audience can infer the negative outcome from the conventional diplomatic phrasing. No additional clarification is introduced, as the indirect formulation reflects standard practices of institutional and political communication, where explicit references to failure are often avoided for pragmatic reasons.

The second translation strategy involves partial explication, in which key evaluative cues or presuppositions are made more explicit to prevent misinterpretation while still retaining a degree of indirectness. For example:

(9) *The project has encountered certain challenges.* – ‘Проект зіткнувся з певними труднощами, що вплинули на терміни його реалізації’.

In the source text, the phrase *certain challenges* implicitly signals the presence of problems or setbacks without specifying their nature or consequences. In the target text, the translator partially explicates this implicit meaning by introducing the evaluative cue ‘*що вплинули на терміни його реалізації*’, which clarifies the significance of these challenges while preserving the indirect, non-confrontational tone characteristic of professional and institutional discourse. This strategy helps prevent potential misinterpretation by the target audience while maintaining the pragmatic function of implicitness.

The third translation strategy is compensation, which entails introducing alternative pragmatic signals, such as evaluative markers, shifts in tone, or contextual cues elsewhere in the text, to offset meanings that cannot be directly transferred. For example:

- (10) *Officials acknowledged that mistakes were made during the operation.* – ‘*Посадовці визнали, що під час операції були допущені помилки, викликавши хвилю критики з боку громадськості*’.

In the source text, the passive construction *mistakes were made* functions as a conventional journalistic euphemism that implicitly downplays responsibility and avoids naming specific actors. This pragmatic nuance cannot be fully preserved through a direct translation alone. To compensate for the loss of implicit evaluative force, the translator introduces an additional contextual cue ‘*викликавши хвилю критики з боку громадськості*’ elsewhere in the sentence. This compensatory element restores the critical undertone and signals the negative public reaction, thereby maintaining the communicative impact of the original media message while adapting it to the expectations and interpretive framework of the target audience.

## 5. Conclusions

The study demonstrates that meaning transformation in digital media translation is the result of a complex interaction between lingual and extralingual factors inherent to digitally mediated communication. Digital media discourse, characterized by multimodality, immediacy, compression, and audience orientation, creates conditions in which meaning is inherently dynamic and context-dependent, significantly expanding the translator’s mediating role.

It has been established that lingual factors at the lexical, syntactic, and discourse levels such as neologization, metaphorization, semantic extension, syntactic compression, implicit cohesion, and pragmatic framing systematically contribute to meaning transformation and necessitate strategic adaptation in translation. At the same time, extralingual factors including technological mediation, platform constraints, audience heterogeneity, temporal pressure, sociocultural norms, and multimodality play a decisive role in shaping both meaning construction and translation strategies.

The analysis confirms that semantic transformations in digital media translation are predominantly realized through translation strategies such as compression and expansion, implemented via omission, concretization, generalization, and explication with functional equivalence taking precedence over formal symmetry. Pragmatic transformations, in turn, arise from shifts in communicative intent and are addressed through modulation of illocutionary force, pragmatic reframing, recontextualization, and compensation.

Special attention has been given to the conveying of implicit meaning in translation, which constitutes a core feature of multimodal digital media communication. The study identifies three principal translation strategies for handling implicit meaning in translation: preservation of implicitness, partial explication, and compensation, each representing a conscious translation choice conditioned by platform conventions, audience competence, and the risk of misinterpretation.

Overall, the findings support the view that semantic and pragmatic transformations in digital media translation are not incidental deviations but strategically motivated adaptive mechanisms. Translation in the multimodal digital media environment functions as a context-sensitive process of

communicative negotiation, in which meaning is fluid, adaptive, and co-constructed. This reinforces the need to conceptualize digital media translation not as a linear transfer of meaning, but as an adaptive, decision-driven process aimed at preserving communicative intent under platform-specific constraints.

*Perspectives* of future possible research may include a deeper investigation of translation strategies in fully multimodal media formats such as video news, podcasts, and interactive social media content where verbal translation interacts with audio-visual semiotic systems. Further studies could also explore the role of AI-assisted translation tools and algorithmically mediated content distribution in shaping translation practices within multimodal digital media environments. Another promising direction involves the comparative analysis of multimodal translation strategies across different linguistic and cultural media systems, which would contribute to a broader understanding of meaning construction in global digital communication.

### Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no competing interest or funding support to declare.

The authors declare no use of generative AI.

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## ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ ЗМІСТУ В МУЛЬТИМОДАЛЬНИХ ЦИФРОВИХ МЕДІА ТА СТРАТЕГІЇ ПЕРЕКЛАДУ

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### Анотація

У статті досліджуються семантичні та прагматичні трансформації в цифровому медіаперекладі, визначаються ключові лінгвальні й екстралінгвальні чинники, що впливають на конструювання смислу в умовах технологічно опосередкованої комунікації, та окреслюються ефективні стратегії перекладу для збереження комунікативного наміру в медіадискурсі цільовою мовою. У дослідженні обґрунтовується, що цифровий медіадискурс, на відміну від традиційних писемних текстів, характеризується мультимодальністю, компресією, оперативністю та виразною орієнтацією на аудиторію, що підвищує варіативність смислу та посилює посередницьку роль перекладача. Особливу увагу приділено лінгвальним чинникам, які реалізуються на лексичному, синтаксичному, дискурсивному та прагматичному рівнях. У статті наголошено на визначальній ролі екстралінгвальних чинників у формуванні та інтерпретації смислу та виборі перекладацьких стратегій, що часто зумовлює пріоритет комунікативної ефективності й релевантності над формальною еквівалентністю. Семантичні трансформації у перекладі цифрових медіатекстів проаналізовано з акцентом на стратегії компресії та розширення, реалізовані через вилучення, конкретизацію, узагальнення й експлікацію. Прагматичні трансформації розглянуто крізь призму модифікації ілюкутивної сили, прагматичного переформатування, реконтекстуалізації та компенсації. Окрему увагу приділено відтворенню імпліцитного смислу, який визначається як ключова характеристика мультимодального цифрового медіадискурсу. У дослідженні виокремлено три основні стратегії передачі імпліцитності: збереження імпліцитності, часткову експлікацію та компенсацію. Отримані результати підтверджують, що семантичні й прагматичні трансформації у перекладі цифрових медіатекстів функціонують як адаптивні механізми, а не як спотворення смислу. Переклад розглядається як контекстуально зумовлений, орієнтований на прийняття рішень процес опосередкованого конструювання смислу, що формується під впливом конвенцій цифрових платформ, очікувань аудиторії та комунікативних цілей.

**Ключові слова:** комунікативний намір, контекстуалізація, міжкультурна комунікація, мультимодальність, орієнтація на аудиторію, прагматична адаптація, семантична варіативність, цифровий медіа переклад.

### Декларація про конфлікт інтересів

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Автори заявляють, що у підготовці цієї статті не використовувалися інструменти штучного інтелекту.